

Washington, DC – During today’s debate on the 2008 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill, 12th District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) took to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives and urged his colleagues to address the needs of veterans in and around the Statesboro area.

“Community-based outpatient clinics play a vital role in meeting the health care needs of our veterans, especially in the rural parts of our country,” Barrow said to Congressman Chet Edwards, the Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. “In my district, a 17-county area centered on Statesboro, Georgia, contains some 34,000 veterans. And I ask for your commitment, Mr. Chairman, to work in conference with the other Body to look at this area, and evaluate the need, and determine the feasibility for a community-based outpatient clinic in Statesboro, Georgia.”

Chairman Edwards responded to Congressman Barrow’s request by stressing the importance of community-based outpatient clinics, and vowed to “work with the gentleman as we go to conference, and to work with the Veterans Administration as well, to put the facts together to see if we can provide funding for the Statesboro clinic. And I know the gentleman will be a strong advocate on its behalf.”

Earlier this year, during Barrow’s Veterans Town Hall Meeting in Statesboro, local veterans voiced growing concern over the long distances they’re forced to travel to reach outpatient clinics that serve Statesboro-area veterans. Barrow has been supportive of grassroots and petition efforts to build a clinic in Bulloch County, and has been working with the House Veterans Affairs Committee on the subject.

“As the population in Statesboro continues to grow, the need for a local VA clinic grows even more urgent,” Barrow said. “With a new generation of veterans coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan, we have a responsibility to provide them with the health care they were promised.”

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